



Lake County
Department of Social Services

Overview of Programs and Services

August 2012

LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



14975 Anderson Ranch Parkway, Lower Lake, CA

With Efficiency, Integrity and Compassion,

Our Mission is to:

- Promote Social and Economic Self-Reliance; and
 - Protect Those Who Are at Risk

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BACKGROUND

Lake County

Lake County is a rural community located in Northern California; it covers a land area of 1,256 square miles and has a total population of 64,665 persons (2010 Census).



(CTRL + click picture above to go to Lake County visitor web-site)

Lake County is divided into northern and southern “shores” by Clear Lake.

Clear Lake, a natural lake, is the largest lake located entirely within the state of California. Around the lake are mountains and beyond a fruited plain of vineyards, walnut groves and, as locals boast, “the world’s largest Bartlett pear growing area.” Clear Lake, earth scientists estimate, is 2.5 million years old; some claim it’s the oldest lake in North America. (www.parks.ca.gov)



Mt. Konocti from North Shore of Clear Lake

Mt. Konocti, an ancient volcano, is the stunning backdrop for nearly every scene around Clear Lake.

(www.lakecounty.com)

Lake County has two incorporated cities, Clearlake on the south shore and Lakeport on the north shore. There are numerous small towns surrounding the lake and situated throughout the County.

Lake County Department of Social Services



Lake County Department of Social Services (LCDSS) is mandated to provide care and assistance for local children and adults who are endangered by abuse, neglect, or exploitation; administer County, State and Federal assistance programs; and provide services and support to enable families to become financially self-sufficient. These mandates are accomplished through partnerships with the community for integrated services and a work environment that supports exceptional performance through teamwork.

LCDSS maintains offices open to the public on both the north and south shores of the County. There are three offices in the south shore area located in the town of Lower Lake, about three miles outside the city limits of Clearlake. All Administrative Services, as well as Eligibility Services for California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, County Medical Services Program (CMSP), General Relief (GR), Section 8 Housing Program and other housing development grants and programs are performed at the south shore office located adjacent to Anderson Marsh State Historic Park.

The Adult Services office administers Adult Protective Services (APS), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), IHSS Public Authority and Public Guardian/Administrator Services, and is located on Main Street in Lower Lake.

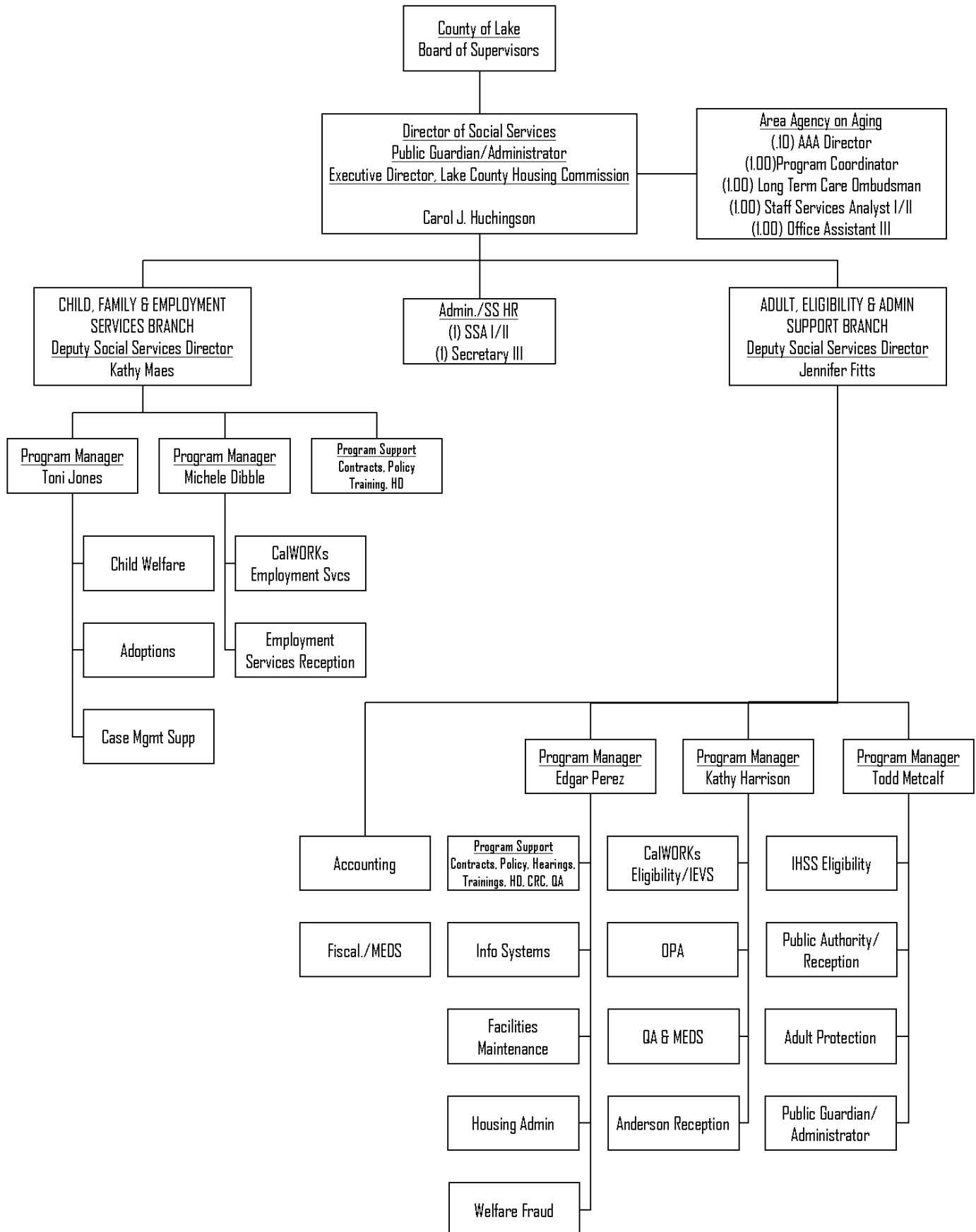
The Employment Services office administers all of the CalWORKs Employment programs and is located at 9055 Hwy. 53, also in Lower Lake.



Anderson Marsh State Historic Park

There are two offices in the north shore area located in the town of Lakeport. The Child Welfare Services (CWS) office administers Children Services programs and is located at 926 S. Forbes St. in Lakeport. The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) office administers a safety net of services for older residents of Lake County and is located at 809 S. Main St. in Lakeport.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Social Services
15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway
P.O. Box 9000
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(800) 628-5288
(707) 995-4200
(707) 995-4204 Fax

Administration/Administrative Services
15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(707) 995-4260
(707) 995-4294 Fax

Adult Services
16170 C Main Street
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(888) 221-2204
(707) 995-4680
(707) 995-4661 Fax

Area Agency on Aging
809 South Main Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

(707) 262-4517
(707) 262-3112 Fax

CalWORKs and Other Program Assistance
15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(800) 628-5288
(707) 995-4200
(707) 995-4204 Fax

Child Welfare Services
926 South Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

(800) 386-4090
(707) 262-0235
(707) 262-0299 Fax

Employment Services
9055 Hwy 53
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(707) 995-9015
(707) 995-9055 Fax

Fraud Investigations
15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(707) 995-4200
(707) 995-2818 Fax

Housing Programs
15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway
Lower Lake, CA 95457

(707) 995-7120
(707) 995-4253 Fax

Website: http://www.co.lake.ca.us/Government/Directory/Social_Services.htm

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Board of Supervisors is the governing body for the County of Lake, one of 58 counties within the State of California. The County is divided into five districts, with each district electing a supervisor to a four-year term of office. The terms are staggered so that not all five offices are up for election at the same time.



The Board of Supervisors generally meets the first through the fourth Tuesday of every month. The meetings, which are open to the public, are held in the Board Chambers at the Courthouse in Lakeport. The Board of Supervisors' responsibilities include adopting the County's annual budget, selecting County Department Heads, adopting County ordinances, setting County operating policies, serving on regional and local committees and addressing the concerns of County residents.

ADMINISTRATION

The LCDSS Director is responsible for the management, organization, and direction of the Social Services Department. The LCDSS Director reports directly to the Lake County Board of Supervisors and works closely with the Lake County Administrative Office and other County departments to address community concerns, maximize the effectiveness of County services, and ensure adequate funding for mandated and discretionary Social Service programs. The Director personally oversees the Deputy Directors, the Administrative Secretary and the Administrative Staff Services Analyst. Leadership, management and all-staff meetings are facilitated by the Director on a regular basis. In addition to specific LCDSS functions, the Director is also designated as the Executive Director of the Lake County Housing Commission, the Lake County Public Administrator, the Lake County Public Guardian, a First Five Lake County Commissioner, a Governing Board Member of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and Chair of the Lake/Mendocino County Area Agency on Aging.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Administrative Support Services Division is divided into four components: Information Systems, Fiscal, Accounting and Facilities Maintenance.

Accounting

The Accounting unit is responsible for preparation of LCDSS annual budget, revenue and expense tracking, completing administrative and assistance expense claims, and preparing statistical reports.

Facilities Maintenance

Facility Maintenance (FM) staff provide service and maintenance of the LCDSS vehicle fleet; maintenance for all LCDSS offices and conference rooms; creating and adjusting floor plans; purchasing, installing and moving furnishings and equipment to accommodate staff movement; and performing routine emergency evacuation drills and safety inspections. The Senior Staff Services Analyst for FM is also responsible for all Advanced Planning Document (APD) processing.

Fiscal

The Fiscal unit provides fiscal support to LCDSS and is responsible for accounts payables, accounts receivables, collections, maintaining office supplies, statistical reporting, MEDS updates, distributing client benefits and processing incoming and outgoing mail. The Fiscal unit is responsible for collecting CalWORKS and CalFresh overpayments and ensuring the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) shows accurate information. Fiscal staff process and issue all payments made by LCDSS, including CalWORKs, Employment Services, Foster Care, Adoptions, General Relief and Child Care payments. The Fiscal unit also process all expenses and income for all Public Guardian clients.

Information Systems

The Information Systems (IS) unit is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the computer network utilized by LCDSS staff, including the purchase and installation of all computer hardware and software. IS works with the State and other entities regarding problems or questions with multiple computer systems utilized by LCDSS staff (including C-IV, MEDS, EBT, CMIPS, and CWS/CMS). The IS unit also works with the County Information Technology Department on multiple programs used throughout all County departments. IS troubleshoots any computer problems and maintains the phone system.

ADULT SERVICES

Adult Services programs are designed to protect, support and advocate for disabled and older adults. The Adult Services Division is made up of multiple programs: Adult Protective Services, In-Home Supportive Services, IHSS Public Authority, Public Administrator, and Public Guardian.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) programs are designed to protect and assist dependent adults age 18-64 and adults 65 years of age and older who are victims of neglect, abuse or exploitation, regardless of income level. APS has 24-hour on-call response

staff to respond to referrals of suspected elder abuse or neglect. When reports of suspected abuse are received, they are screened by a social worker to determine if there is sufficient evidence to warrant an in-person investigation. If there is sufficient evidence, a social worker determines if an investigation needs to occur immediately or within 10 days.

Upon completion of the investigation, APS staff evaluates the case, completes a case plan and arranges for services such as advocacy, counseling, money management, out-of-home placement, protective services or conservatorship. Each case plan is based on the needs of the individual. APS staff works with the District Attorney's Vertical Prosecution unit, law enforcement, the Public Guardian/Public Administrator's office, and community-based agencies to obtain the appropriate services.

In-Home Supportive Services

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program is designed to provide domestic and personal care services to low-income aged, blind and disabled persons who, without these services, would be unable to remain in their homes and would require placement in costlier long-term institutional care. IHSS services can include assistance with meal preparation, laundry, shopping, transportation, bathing, dressing, and bowel and bladder care.

In order to be eligible to receive IHSS services, applicants must be eligible for the Medi-Cal program. Once Medi-Cal eligibility has been established, an IHSS Social Worker meets with the applicant to assess his/her physical and/or mental limitations. If the applicant qualifies for the IHSS program, the Social Worker determines the necessary services and the number of service hours. The IHSS Social Worker will meet with each recipient a minimum of once a year, or more often as needed, to reassess the recipient's needs.

In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Committee

The Lake County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Advisory Committee consists of 11 members of whom at least 50% are current or past recipients of personal assistance. The IHSS Advisory Committee's membership must be composed of four senior citizen consumer representatives, two disabled consumer representatives, two senior community representatives, one disabled community representative and two IHSS provider representatives. IHSS Advisory Committee members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors to a two-year term. Members may be appointed to a subsequent term at the desire of the Committee members and approval of the Board of Supervisors.

The duties of the IHSS Advisory Committee include providing ongoing advice and recommendations regarding the IHSS program to the Board of Supervisors and any administrative entity in the County that is related to the delivery and administration of IHSS.

Public Administrator

The Public Administrator is authorized to protect the assets of decedents when no executor or administrator has been appointed to the estate, when property belonging to the person's estate is at risk of loss, damage or misappropriation or when ordered to by the Court. The Public Administrator has the responsibility of attempting to locate a will, the next of kin and protect all assets of the estate.

The duties of the Public Administrator are to protect the decedent's property from waste, loss or theft; make appropriate burial arrangements; conduct a thorough investigation to discover all assets; and, pay outstanding obligations, including taxes. The Public Administrator liquidates and disburses the estate according to the decedent's will, if there is one, or according to probate code.

Public Authority

The IHSS Public Authority (PA) was designed to enhance services to IHSS providers and recipients. The PA serves as the employer of record for IHSS providers, maintains a registry of screened care providers, and offers training to providers and recipients. With the establishment of the PA as the "employer of record", IHSS providers are able to negotiate for wage increases and benefits.

The PA staff maintains an IHSS provider registry and referral system to match screened IHSS providers with recipients needing assistance finding a provider. The screening process includes attending a mandatory orientation, which requires a sight-verified original California ID and social security card. In addition they must provide references, be fingerprinted, and pass a criminal background check.

Public Guardian

The Public Guardian serves as the court-appointed Conservator for adults who are determined to be gravely disabled due to a mental or medical illness and, as a result, are unable to provide for their own basic needs. There are two types of Conservatorships; Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Conservatorships and Probate Conservatorships. LPS Conservatorships are established for individuals who are determined gravely disabled as a result of mental illness. The Public Guardian works in partnership with Lake County Mental Health for all LPS Conservatorships. An LPS Conservatorship lasts for one year; if necessary, the Public Guardian can petition the Court to renew the conservatorship. Probate Conservatorships are established for individuals determined gravely disabled as a result of a medical illness. The Public Guardian is generally appointed as conservator when there are no family members who are willing or able to be appointed.

In order to establish a conservatorship, the Public Guardian must investigate and document the reasons necessitating the conservatorship, obtain the necessary petitions and prove the case in court. Once a Probate Conservatorship is established, it will remain in effect until the Conservatee proves to the court that the Conservatorship is not necessary.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

LCDSS administers the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Lake and Mendocino Counties. The AAA and community partners work together to address the needs of older adults in Lake and Mendocino Counties. The AAA provides leadership and advocacy; develops community-based systems of care that provide services which support independence and dignity; protects the quality of life and prevents abuse of older person and person with functional impairments; and promotes citizen involvement and participation.

CALWORKS AND OTHER PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

There are numerous programs that make up the CalWORKs/Other Program Assistance (OPA) division of LCDSS; services provided by these programs can include monetary assistance, assistance with food and medical coverage. Families or individuals in need of services must complete and submit an application. Staff reviews the application and assists the applicant in determining what services are needed through LCDSS and provides information on additional services available through community based agencies. Staff also makes the determination if the applicant meets emergency assistance criteria. Except for emergency situations, applicants must provide proof that they meet the specific income and eligibility requirements linked to the program(s) applied for before assistance can be granted. The CalWORKs/OPA Staff Services Analysts provide staff training policy interpretation and represent the County for fair hearings.

CalFresh

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The CalFresh Program, historically and commonly known as the Food Stamp Program is designed to help meet the nutritional needs of people with low income. It supports healthy living which is important to agriculture in California and it is better viewed as a health and nutrition program. CalFresh may not be used for items such as liquor, cigarettes, household supplies, or hot foods. The CalFresh allotments are determined on a quarterly basis utilizing income information received from the family.

While Food Stamps were once provided in coupon form, the state began delivering nutrition assistance benefits via EBT Cards (similar to ATM cards) in 1996. The EBT Program was implemented in Lake County on July 1, 2004. The cards are accepted at grocers and retailers throughout the State and across the country. The account balance is automatically adjusted according to purchases. The EBT system increases security and reliability of benefits, modernizes benefit redemption and reduces stigma attached to purchases made with paper coupons.

CalWORKs

(California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids)

Assistance available through the CalWORKs program is time limited for adults; it is designed to provide eligible, needy families with temporary cash assistance and services. Once a family has met the eligibility requirements, cash payments are made on a monthly basis to help pay for housing, food, utilities and other necessary expenses. The amount of assistance a family receives is determined by many factors including family size and income. Additional payments can also be made if there are special circumstances such as pregnancy or homelessness. Assistance payments are recalculated on a quarterly basis utilizing updated information received from the family. Most CalWORKs recipients are also eligible for assistance through the Medi-Cal and CalFresh programs.

CalWORKs recipients have the option of receiving their cash benefits through an EBT card or they may have benefit direct deposited into their bank account. The EBT card can be used at designated retailers or ATMs to access their monthly cash grant and CalFresh benefits.

CalWORKs Diversion

Some applicants for the CalWORKs program may only require one-time assistance with a payment or service and are not in need of extended assistance payments. The Diversion Program is intended to address this kind of situation. The CalWORKs applicant must still meet all eligibility and income criteria for the CalWORKs program in order to be eligible for a Diversion payment. The amount of a Diversion payment is determined based on the family's immediate needs, such as paying for a car repair or covering household bills. Before a diversion payment is issued, the family must verify they are employed or have other specific means of continued support.

County Medical Services Program

The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) is a medical coverage program subscribed to by many rural California counties. CMSP is administered by the Office of County Health Services, a division of the California Department of Health Services, on behalf of the CMSP Governing Board, which is comprised of county supervisors, administrators, health officials, and welfare directors. Counties with a population of less than 300,000 are eligible to subscribe to the CMSP Program; subscribing counties are required to pay a participation fee to help fund the program.

The purpose of CMSP is to provide essential health care services to indigent adults who are not eligible for benefits under the Medi-Cal program and whose income is insufficient to pay medical bills while still meeting their basic needs. Eligibility criteria for CMSP are very similar to the Medi-Cal program but without restrictions on age, disability status or dependent children in the home. The CMSP benefits include many of those covered by the Medi-Cal program, with the exception of pregnancy-related services, long-term care, and services provided by chiropractors, acupuncturists, and psychologists.

Foster Care

Eligibility staff specializing in Foster Care services process and issues payments made to Foster Homes for each foster child within the County. Upon request from CWS Social Workers, Foster Care eligibility staff opens a case for each child placed in Foster Care. Eligibility staff collects birth certificates, social security cards, and immunization records for the child and residency and income information for the parents in order to complete a case. Based on this information, the eligibility worker makes a determination for the appropriate funding source for the case: County, State, or Federal funds are utilized to pay for Foster Care services. Foster Care cases must be recertified every 12 months.

General Relief

The General Relief (GR) program is a county-funded general assistance voucher program for indigent county residents, which offers repayable benefits. The GR Program provides necessary assistance to eligible persons who are without resources to meet their minimum basic needs for food, housing, utilities, clothing and medical care. The employable General Relief recipients shall be prohibited from receiving General Relief for more than three (3) months in any twelve-month period. The medical care is provided through the County Medical Services Program.

GR housing payments are issued directly to the recipient's landlord. Food Vouchers may be issued directly to the recipient, but are only redeemable at participating grocery stores. An allowance for personal needs such as soap, toothpaste and household

paper goods is also available to eligible recipients and is issued in conjunction with the Food Voucher.

Unless disabled, GR recipients must participate in the County approved employment plan. This employment plan may include, but is not limited to, job skills workshop, job training sessions, work search, or vocational rehabilitation programs. GR staff assigns each able-bodied recipient to a specific work project to work the required number of hours, at minimum wage standards, to equate to the amount of General Relief assistance paid by the County for the current month. GR is not paid until the work requirements are met.

Persons in receipt of General Relief based on a disability that is expected to last for more than 12 months must apply for and cooperate fully in the application process for Social Security State Supplemental Income (SSI). If a GR recipient is approved for SSI benefits, the County receives a payment to repay the benefits received. GR recipients may also be eligible to receive assistance under the CalFresh program.

Medi-Cal

Medi-Cal is California's version of the federal Medicaid Health Care Program. The Medi-Cal program is designed to provide health care services to qualified low-income persons; primarily families with children, the aged, blind or disabled. Families or individuals receiving assistance from CalWORKs, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Program (SSI/SSP), Foster Care or Adoption Assistance Program are usually eligible to receive Medi-Cal benefits.

Some recipients of the Medi-Cal program may have to pay a share of cost before Medi-Cal will provide benefits in a given month. The share of cost is determined based upon the recipient's monthly income. Medi-Cal is a large program made up of many specialized programs, which are designed to benefit applicants in various medical situations. Most of these specialized programs may reduce or eliminate the share of cost for some or all medical services. All applications are reviewed in order to determine which Medi-Cal program best suits the applicant's needs.

There is currently two Medi-Cal staff working at one local community hospital and one community health clinic accepting and processing patient applications for Medi-Cal benefits. Staff accepts and processes the application while the patient receives medical services. This arrangement has been advantageous for the hospitals, the clinics, and the patients: the patient does not need to travel to the LCDSS office to apply for Medi-Cal benefits; and, the hospitals or clinic are able to bill Medi-Cal for the services provided instead of billing the patient directly.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

LCDSS administers the Child Welfare Services (CWS) program under federal and state statutes and regulations. CWS is responsible to obtain or provide interventions and services to address child abuse and neglect; and, increase the well-being of children and families. A Supervising Staff Services Analyst in CWS oversees all related Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and contracts.

The four traditional service components of the program were established through State Senate Bill 14, enacted in 1982 to implement federal requirements under Public Law 96-272:

- Emergency Response
- Family Maintenance
- Family Reunification
- Permanent Placement

Emergency Response

Emergency Response (ER) services are provided 24 hours a day. When reports of suspected child abuse are received, they are first screened by a Social Worker to determine if there is sufficient evidence of abuse or neglect, to warrant an in-person investigation. Those reports that do not have sufficient evidence are “evaluated out” and a case is not opened. The family may be referred to other community services. If there is sufficient evidence, a Social Worker determines if an investigation needs to occur immediately or within 10 days. This decision is based on whether the child appears to be at imminent or substantial risk of abuse or neglect. Several outcomes can occur as a result of the investigation: the case is closed, the child remains at home and the parents accept services, or the child is removed from the parents.

If the ER Social Worker (or a police officer) determines that the child cannot remain safely at home, immediate steps are taken to remove and place the child in a safe environment, such as emergency foster care. The child can be placed into protective custody for up to 48 hours. During those 48 hours, a Social Worker will assess whether the child can safely be returned home with supportive services or whether the intervention of the juvenile court is needed.

If the Social Worker determines that the protection of the juvenile court is needed, they must prepare and file a petition with the juvenile court within 48 hours after the child has been removed from the parent or guardian. The petition is a legal document containing evidence that court intervention is necessary for the safety of the child. The court process involves a series of hearings and case reviews.

Family Maintenance

Family Maintenance (FM) provides time-limited protective services to families in crisis to prevent or remedy abuse or neglect, allowing Social Workers to work with the family while keeping the child in the home. Services can include counseling, respite care, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, victim services, and parenting education. FM may be based upon a voluntary agreement with the parents where the court is not involved, or the juvenile court may order services to be provided under Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. FM Services are provided for 6 months but may be extended if there is evidence that the objectives of the service plan can be achieved within the extended time period. If, after that time, the family is unable to adequately care for the child, the county may petition the juvenile court to place the child in out-of-home (foster) care.

Family Reunification

Family Reunification (FR) provides time-limited intervention and support services to parents and to children who have been removed from the home to make the family environment safe for the child to return. A reunification plan is agreed to by the parents and the FR Social Worker. Services are made available to parents that can include

counseling, emergency shelter care, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, and parent education. These services are limited to 6 to 12 months, depending on the age of the child, but may be extended if there is substantial probability that with continued services the child will be able to return home. The reunification plan must be satisfactorily fulfilled for the children to be returned home.

Permanent Placement

Permanent Placement (PP) services are meant to ensure that children from families where there has been neglect or abuse can grow up in a permanent, safe, and secure living arrangement. When parents fail to successfully reunify with their children within the mandated time frames, the Social Worker is required to develop an alternative permanent living arrangement for the children. Federal policy prefers adoption as a first alternative option. If adoption is not possible, legal guardianship, preferably with a relative, is the second favored choice. If, these options are not available, children may continue in Foster Care with annual permanency reviews until their 18th birthday when they “age out” of the Child Welfare System, although the deadline can be extended.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

CalWORKs Employment Services

Unless exempt, all CalWORKs recipients are required to participate in Employment Services activities to remain eligible for the CalWORKs program. Employment Services activities are designed to assist CalWORKs recipients to obtain and retain employment. All CalWORKs recipients receive an orientation to the Employment Services program and complete an appraisal of their educational and employment history. At the time of orientation, recipients are also screened for learning disabilities and, if applicable, referred for a learning disabilities evaluation. If it is determined that the recipient does have a learning disability, the recipient will receive Employment Services based upon the specific requirements set forth in the learning disabilities evaluation.

Initially, most CalWORKs recipients receive 4-6 weeks of intensive job search and employment related activities before any additional Employment Services are provided. If employment is not obtained during the initial work search period, additional Employment Services are provided. To determine which services the participant needs, a vocational assessment is completed by the participant's Employment & Training Worker. Available services can include vocational training programs, adult education, on-the-job training or unpaid work experience programs. Other Employment Services include domestic abuse counseling and shelter, drug and alcohol treatment, counseling and residential placement, and mental health counseling. While CalWORKs recipients are participating in Employment Services activities, they are entitled to receive supportive service payments to cover childcare expenses, transportation costs and work or training related expenses.

While adult recipients of CalWORKs are no longer eligible to receive CalWORKs assistance after they reach their time limit, dependent children continue to be aided. Instead of the family receiving monthly cash assistance, payments are issued directly to landlord and utility companies. Any remaining balance of CalWORKs assistance is issued to the family.

CalWORKs Employment Services also include a mandatory component for pregnant and parenting teens where the teen's activity is limited to completion of high school diploma or equivalent. Such teens receive intensive case management and are eligible to supportive services including counseling, child care, transportation and ancillary expenses necessary for participation.

CalWORKs Linkages Program

Linkages is a program in CalWORKs that coordinates Child Welfare Services (CWS); Family Maintenance (FM) or Family Reunification (FR) plans; and, Employment Services plans for families receiving services from both programs. Linkages program facilitates access to a broad array of coordinated services for families with domestic violence, mental health issues, alcohol and drug abuse, and other barriers to self-sufficiency. The program keeps the children safe by helping families to achieve self-sufficiency, stability and well being through coordinated, family-focused partnerships.

CalWORKs On-the-Job Training (OJT)

The OJT program provides Employment Services participants with the training and work experience necessary to obtain and maintain permanent employment, thereby becoming self-sufficient. Qualifying participants are given the opportunity to apply for training positions in a variety of jobs. LCDSS has an agreement with each worksite to provide OJT participants with training and work experience that prepares them to qualify for permanent employment.

FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS

Fraud investigators are co-located with LCDSS staff at the Main Lower Lake facility to receive and respond to allegations of suspected fraud in the CalWORKs and CalFresh programs. Fraud staff tracks reports of suspected abuse through the Welfare Fraud Referral Database. Upon receipt, staff investigates the claim and updates the database to indicate the status of the investigation.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

The LCDSS Director is the Executive Director of the Lake County Housing Commission. The Lake County Housing Commission administers the Section 8 Housing Voucher Program funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8

The Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8 is a rental assistance program for low income households. The purpose of the Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8 is to meet three primary goals: provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for very low income households while maintaining their rent payments at an affordable level; promote freedom of housing choice and spatial de-concentration of low-income households of all races and ethnic background; and, provide an incentive to private property owners to rent to low-income households by offering timely rental payments. The Program also supports the local rental market by encouraging unit maintenance by landlords, responsible tenancy by program participants and self-sufficiency among participating families.

Staff is responsible to maintain a waiting list of eligible families and provide outreach to rental property regarding the Section 8 Program. Staff issue vouchers in a manner ensuring the Section 8 Program will remain close to the 100% lease-up rate. On an annual/interim basis, staff recertify the rental amount, family eligibility, and perform housing quality standards inspections on each residence at least annually.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8 also encourages economic independence among participating families by operating a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program for up to 36 Section 8 households. FSS is a HUD program that encourages low-income families receiving Section 8 Housing assistance to obtain employment that will lead them to economic independence and self-sufficiency.

All families or individuals receiving Section 8 Housing assistance are eligible to participate in the FSS Program. HA staff and the head of each family execute a FSS contract of participation that specifies the rights and responsibilities of both parties. The 5-year FSS contract specifies goals and services for each family. The FSS contract requires that the family comply with their lease, that all family members become independent of welfare, and that the head of the family seek and maintain suitable employment. An interest bearing FSS escrow account is established for each participating family. An escrow credit, based on increases in earned income of the family, is credited to this account during the term of the FSS contract. If the family completes the contract and no member of the family is receiving CalWORKs or CalFresh, the amount of the FSS account is paid to the head of the family.

Housing Choice Voucher Program Resident Advisory Board – Section 8

The Resident Advisory Board – Section 8 (RAB) is responsible for providing assistance in development of the local Housing Agency five-year and annual plans and making recommendations to the Board of Housing Commissioners regarding changes to the Section 8 Housing Program. The RAB consists of up to eleven Section 8 participants. Meetings are held on an as needed basis, but from October through March meetings may occur on a monthly basis.

Housing First-Time Homebuyer Program and Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Programs

LCDSS administers the First-Time Homebuyer Program and Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Programs from its office in Lower Lake. These programs are partially financed by grants from the California Department of Housing and Community Development using federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) resources of Home and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

RECEPTION SERVICES

Reception staff is the first point of contact for all clients coming into LCDSS facilities. Additionally, reception staff is responsible for maintenance of file storage, file retrieval, preparation of new case files, routing phone calls, copier maintenance, assistance with operation of Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTY), and operation of the Statewide Fingerprint Imaging System (SFIS) program and Live Scan equipment. Staff also periodically purges closed files in storage.

Other responsibilities vary depending on office location. Staff working in the Children's Services office process Health and Education passports; proof, track, and file court reports and notices; and track and process foster care placements. Staff working in the Adult Services office input IHSS provider payroll information into the Case Management Information and Payroll System (CMIPS) and input contracts for new IHSS providers. Staff working with Eligibility Services receives applications for program assistance, verify information on the application, schedule intake interviews and distribute mail-in applications to intake staff.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

LCDSS contracts with numerous agencies to provide specific service components for the programs it administers. These contract agencies are required to submit reports on specific program information and individuals served. These agencies can provide all or a part of the program components.

CalWORKs Behavioral Health Services

CalWORKs recipients participating in Employment Services are eligible to receive behavioral health services as a part of their Employment Services program. Contract staff complete an assessment of each recipient referred for services as well as an individual treatment plan. Services include individual and group counseling, monitoring participant progress with treatment plans, providing referrals for additional services and reporting to eligibility staff.

CalWORKs Domestic Violence Services

Contract staff provides domestic violence services in both the cities of Clearlake and Lakeport. The contractor provides counseling services for CalWORKs recipients and their families and also manages a shelter for women and children in need of a safe, supportive environment. They work very closely with the participant to ensure the participant's safety and to coordinate services with other agencies. The contractor also provides domestic violence sensitivity training to CalWORKs staff and other partner agencies.

CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Assessments

LCDSS staff refers Employment Services participants for learning disabilities assessments to be completed by a contractor. The contractor meets individually with each referred participant and administers specific tests, which include an aptitude test, achievement test and a vocational interest test. The testing is utilized to determine if the participant has a learning disability. The contractor completes a written evaluation, which includes a determination on the existence of a learning disability, severity of the disability, recommended accommodations and recommendations for additional services.

CalWORKs Pediculosis Anti-Lice (PAL) Program

Contract staff from the PAL Program works at numerous schools throughout the County providing lice eradication services to families. Contract staff performs head checks at designated school sites, provide information on head lice education, treatment and eradication, and make home visits to CalWORKs participants in need of additional services. These services can include referrals to other programs, the purchase of supplies necessary to aid in the treatment of lice eradication or loaning of appliances

such as vacuums. The contractor works closely with the family to assist with any questions or difficulties in administering the treatments. The primary goal of the PAL Program is for the child to be able to return to school lice-free thus allowing the parent to return to work or participate in other Employment Services activities.

CalWORKs Stage 1 Childcare

LCDSS contracts for Stage 1 Childcare provider payments. The contractor meets with each Employment Services participant to educate and advise selection of an appropriate childcare provider. If the participant is having difficulties in obtaining a childcare provider, contract staff will assist. Once a provider has been found, the contractor meets with the participant and provider and informs them of program regulations and policies, and ensures the provider meets licensing or registration requirements. Each month the contractor verifies monthly participation hours against providers' claims, authorizes payments and then forwards to LCDSS for payment.

Emergency Foster Care Beds

LCDSS contracts with a Foster Family agency to provide emergency foster care beds. This insures that CWS staff will be able to place a child in a safe environment until other placement arrangements can be made. When a child is removed from the home, it can be difficult to find a foster home able to take a child. Oftentimes this occurs with little or no notice, and in the middle of the night.

LCDSS STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The statistical information included in this report is a compilation of data from numerous sources including statistical data reports submitted to the State, County Expense Claim information and current database records. We have also attached links to the State Department of Social Services stats and many other links that may benefit research.

Fiscal Year July 2011 – June 2012

Average number of open cases per month by program:

Program	Open Cases
<i>CalWORKs</i>	1,204
<i>CalFresh</i>	5,056
<i>Medi-Cal</i>	6,050
<i>CMSP</i>	1,378
<i>Foster Care</i>	150
<i>GR</i>	16
<i>IHSS</i>	1,736
<i>CWS</i>	209

Additional Resources

California Department of Social Services (CDSS):

[CalFresh](#)

[CalWORKS](#)

[Children](#)

[Disability/Adult](#)

[Fraud](#)

[Multiple Programs](#)

California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS):

[Medi-Cal](#)

California Department of Aging:

[Statistics/Demographics/Publications](#)

Federal Census Bureau:

[Data Tool](#)